



SIERRA PACIFIC INDUSTRIES

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2/12/2021

Clay Davis
District Planner
Feather River Ranger District
875 Mitchell Avenue
Oroville, CA 95965

Subject: Feather Falls Trailhead Salvage Project

Dear Clay,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Categorical Exclusion (CE) for the “Feather Falls Trailhead Salvage Project”.

Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI) operates nearby forest product manufacturing facilities in Lincoln, Oroville and Quincy. The facilities mentioned play critical roles in the local economies and infrastructure, through providing family wage jobs for their employees.

SPI supports the purpose and need of this project, as it is essential to remove the roadside hazard trees that pose a safety risk to the public traveling in highly recreated areas, as well as the workers using this road system. The recovery of the salvageable timber in a timely matter is crucial for recovering the maximum economic value of the burned timber, while also contributing to the rural communities by supplying a wood supply to local mills which provides considerable employment in their surrounding areas. Recovery and reestablishment of the burned landscape is critical for the growth and regeneration of new seedlings in this high-site area, as well as reducing the amount of debris and fuel loading that would exist in a future wildfire event. The prompt implementation of the project would benefit the restoration of habitat, regeneration of the landscape, safety to the public and other landowners in the area, and the merchantability of the salvage timber.

The SPI Stirling District has property which completely surrounds the “Government 40” parcel, as well as a shared property line with the Feather Falls Trailhead area of the project. We are actively logging the damaged timber on our own ownership, which was also a result of the Bear Fire. With the Trailhead Salvage Project including areas on main traveled haul roads, it is imperative for the timely removal of these hazard trees for the safety of our log truck drivers, logging contractors, foresters, landowners, and the public. The active operations taking place on the surrounding SPI ownership is being conducted to restore our land following the burn by replanting to grow a forest which may provide ecological, economical, and sociological benefits for future generations.

As a neighboring landowner and stewardship partner, it is of utmost importance to reduce these safety hazard risks of roadside hazard trees by implementing the hazard tree removal portion of this project as quickly as possible. The expedited removal of these trees will also increase the merchantability of the trees removed, by not allowing the trees to decay further or become subject to bug infestation. The critical aspect for providing quality wood products to mills is the timeliness of the project, where wood quality only degrades with time and how long it takes to implement the management objectives of this project. SPI appreciates the inclusion of “...*Providing adequate timber supplies contributes to the economic stability of rural communities in the Sierra Nevada Forests...*” in your planning document. We depend on the consistent, reliable-supply of economical products from National Forests to produce quality wood products for the American public. The Bear Fire had devastating effects on the rural and local communities, and through the harvest and manufacturing of these materials, local communities and infrastructure can be supported.

SPI supports the Forest Service’s assessment that this project falls within categories of work excluded from documentation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), and will support the Forest’s decision to do so. Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tanner Olson".

Tanner Olson
Sierra Pacific Industries
Lincoln Division Forester